

# Pollution Prevention

## Make it Work for You

*Have you considered a pollution prevention approach to help solve your waste management problem?*

Spic & Span, Inc.; Terry Printer, Inc.; Uniroyal Goodrich Tire Co.; and Wisconsin Electric Power Co. did, and the results were impressive. These four Wisconsin corporations shared the 1990 Governor's Award for Excellence in Hazardous Waste Reduction. By implementing a pollution prevention approach, each company saved money and kept large amounts of hazardous waste from entering the environment.

Several multinational corporations, such as 3M, Dupont, General Dynamics and Chevron have adopted pollution prevention programs, too. 3M has saved about **\$1/2 BILLION** since implementing their plan! **Pollution prevention benefits businesses,** as well as human health and the environment!

## Waste Management Strategy

In the past, treatment and disposal of waste was emphasized. Today, most people agree there is a better waste management strategy:

**First:** Prevent the formation or production of pollutants at the source.

**Second:** Reuse or recycle any wastes that cannot be prevented.

**Third:** Provide treatment for any wastes that cannot be prevented or recycled.

**Fourth:** Ensure the safe release or disposal of any residuals that cannot be prevented, recycled, or treated.

## Model Policy

Companies find it effective to have a written policy to guide their efforts. The following statements were taken from policies which successful companies have used. Use these statements to help create and implement your policies:

***"It is the policy of National Widget Corporation to be a responsible organization in regard to our employees, consumers of our products, the general public, and the environment."***

We implement this policy by:

1. Meeting or exceeding all applicable federal, state and local environmental and health related regulation.
2. Preventing pollution at the source whenever and wherever possible.
3. Conserving natural resources through reuse and recycling.
4. Reducing our costs for raw materials, labor, and waste treatment through pollution prevention and recycling.
5. Producing products that have a minimum effect on the environment and no adverse effects on public health.
6. Involving all employees in the accomplishments of this policy and rewarding all significant achievements.
7. Annually reporting to public on the amounts of wastes reduced and the amounts and types of waste still being discharged

## Steps to Pollution Prevention

Here are some guidelines that successful companies such as Dow and 3M have followed to implement pollution prevention:

1. Publicize your policy within the corporation. Reach and involve all employees.
2. Assign someone at a high level to be the pollution prevention coordinator. Larger firms may need to assign coordinators by building, plant, process, or production line.

3. Consult with DNR to determine what waste streams must be reduced to meet all applicable regulations, look for areas where you can do even better than meeting minimum requirements, and learn where you can get more assistance.
4. Pursue the easiest waste minimization opportunities first (housekeeping, waste stream separation, raw material changes, raw material recovery, purchasing and and storage procedures). Pursue more complex opportunities later (process changes, equipment changes, product changes).
5. Consider using consultants to help you.
6. Quantify raw material purchases and waste stream discharges.
7. Trace the waste streams to where the wastes are produced.
8. Examine accounting procedures to ensure that all costs, including waste treatment, handling, transport, disposal, monitoring and long-term liability are properly assigned to departments and product lines.
9. Document and evaluate results. Publicize success stories and recognize employee achievements.
10. Learn about new techniques by working with other firms, trade associations, University Extension, EPA and DNR.
11. Keep in mind that pollution prevention is an ongoing activity. Employees at all levels of the corporation must continually pull together to ensure successful implementation of your pollution prevention policy.

## **Share Information**

Let others know what works for you. The more pollution we prevent, the better the health of our planet. And that's beneficial for everyone.